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THE GERMAN DE FACTO ANNEXATION OF THE NORTHEASTERN ITALIAN PROVINCES

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Description

An account of German administrative and cultural measures in the northeastern Italian provinces since the Italian surrender, showing that these territories have been practically annexed to the Greater German Reich.

1 September 1944

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Summary

The northern and northeastern Italian provinces of the Trentino and Venezia Giulia, annexed to Italy at the conclusion of the World War after decades of irredentist agitation, have great sentimental importance to Italians as symbols of Italian patriotic aspirations. Because of the substantial non-Italian population in these regions (German in Bolzano and Yugoslav in Venezia Giulia) the Italian government carried out a harsh policy of Italianization after 1919. All German claims to Bolzano were renounced by Adolf Hitler in 1938, and a plebiscite held in this region and the province of Belluno in 1939 resulted in a decision of 185,000 voters of German origin to return to Germany. Despite this German renunciation, the Fascist government attempted to strengthen its Alpine frontiers against Germany; but after the Italian surrender in 1943 German military control was speedily established throughout northern Italy.

Both the Venezia Tridentina and the province of Belluno as well as the Venezia Guilia and the province of Udine were given special administrative status, clearly pointing toward German annexation, shortly after the Italian collapse. Two special administrative zones were established, the Alpenvorland, embracing the provinces of Bolzano, Trento, and Belluno, and the Adriatisches Küstenland, embracing the Italian provinces of Udine, Gorizia, Trieste, Pola,

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and Fiume, together with the Yugoslav region of Ljubljana, the city of Sušak and surrounding territory, and the island of Krk. Each zone was placed under a High Commissioner, who is at the same time Gauleiter of the adjacent administrative division of the Greater German Reich (the Gaue of Tirol-Vorarlberg and Kärnten, respectively). Frontier control has been established between the two zones and the provinces under the Fascist puppet government. Inhabitants of the two zones are treated as German nationals and are subject to military service in the Wehrmacht. German official spokesmen have avoided declaring these regions actually annexed to Germany, but unofficial German statements show that the Alpenvorland, at least, is already regarded as an integral part of Reich territory.

The administration of the Alpenvorland and Adriatisches Küstenland has been divorced from that of Italy, and the Italian system of provincial and local government has been modified in such a manner as to ensure German control. German advisers act as representatives of the High Commissioner in each province and supervise the activities of the prefects, all of whom have been replaced by the Nazi authorities. The police is under German control. Far-reaching changes have been effected in the existing legal system. Italian law is valid only when it does not conflict with subsequent German orders, and the legislation of the Fascist puppet government is not enforced. The courts have

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been made independent of the Italian national judicial system. Economic control is in German hands. The influence of the Fascist Party has been reduced to a minimum, and in the Alpenvorland the Party appears to have been dissolved altogether.

The Nazi authorities have systematically endeavored to de-Italianize the Alpenvorland and Adriatisches Küstenland and to suppress every vestige of Italian culture, notwithstanding the fact that Italians constitute a great majority of the population of the Alpenvorland and a majority in the Adriatisches Küstenland. Italian newspapers have been suppressed and replaced by German or Slovene-language publications. Use of the Italian language is discouraged. Italian schools have been suppressed. The cinema and radio have been Germanized. Italians are discriminated against in public and private life, and in some instances have been deported.

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THE GERMAN DE FACTO ANNEXATION OF THE NORTHEASTERN ITALIAN PROVINCES

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the earliest and most enduring of Italian territorial aspirations has been the acquisition of all of the peninsular territories lying on the southern side of the Alps. The completion of Italian unification in the 1860's left Italy with unsatisfied claims to several northern and northeastern provinces, largely populated by Italians, which remained under Austrian rule. These provinces, known collectively as Italia Irredenta or "Unredeemed Italy," embraced both the Trentino in the north and the so-called Julian Region (corresponding to the modern compartimento of Venezia Giulia) in the northeast. Both territories acquired great sentimental importance as symbols of Italian patriotic aspirations. They were annexed to Italy at the conclusion of the World War.

The presence of substantial non-Italian populations in the new provinces gave rise to further problems. The province of Bolzano contained a large proportion of German-speaking people who continued to regard themselves as members of the cultural German community. Farther east, in the Venezia Giulia, was a large Slavic (Slovenian and Croatian) population which resented its transference to Italian rule instead of to the new Yugoslav state. In order to eliminate the possibility of foreign claims to the newly

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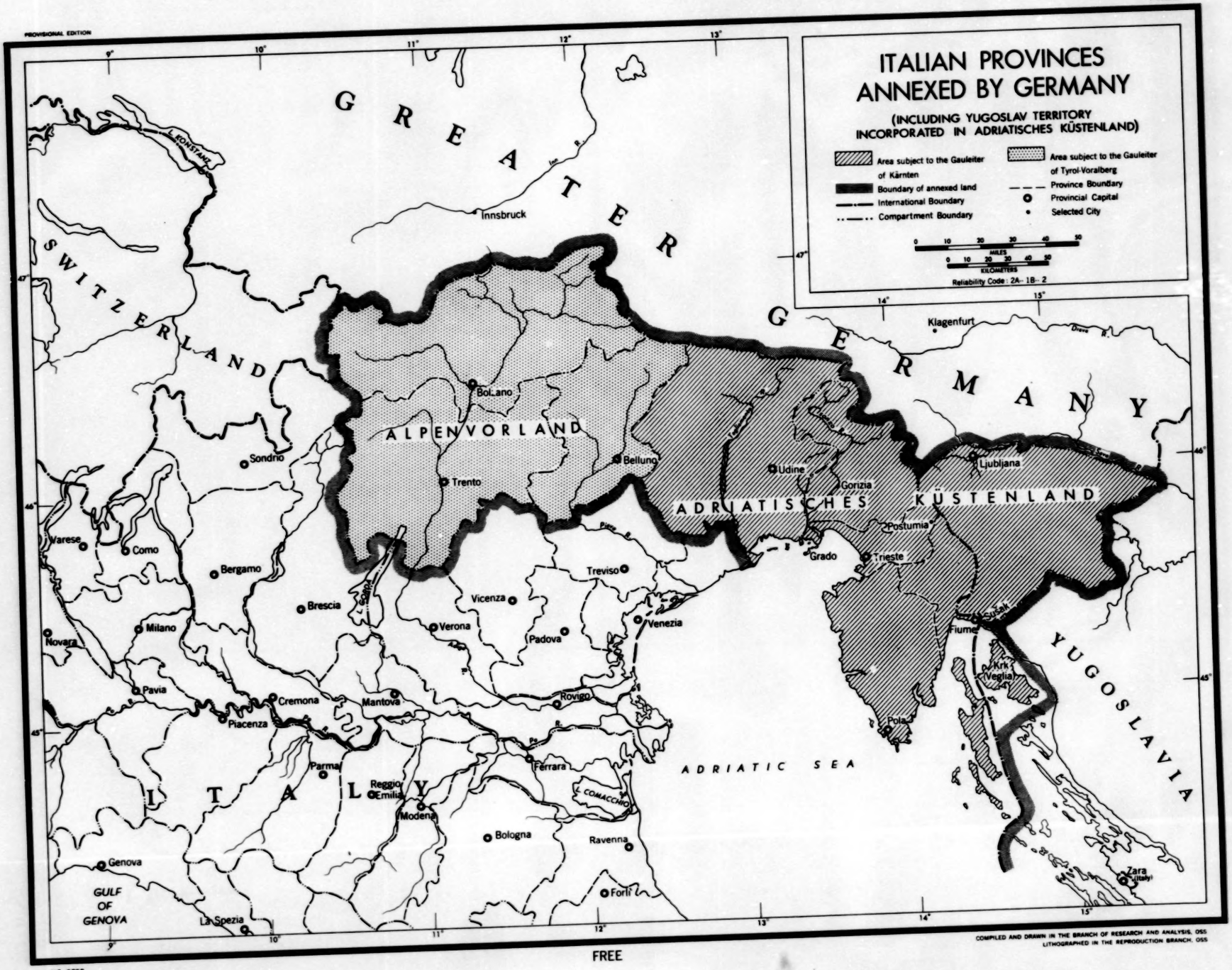

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annexed territories, the Italian government carried out a harsh policy of Italianization in both regions. Italian was made the only legal language, and various extreme measures were applied with the aim of eliminating all cultural and sentimental ties with Germany or Yugoslavia.

The rise of an aggressive nationalist government in Germany in 1933 was a serious threat to Italy's permanent possession of the German-speaking areas of the Venezia Tridentina. German claims to these areas had never been entirely given up. After the formation of the Rome-Berlin Axis, however, Germany clearly intimated that it had no territorial demands to make against Italy. A series of statements to this effect made by Hitler himself in the spring of 1938 was climaxed by his declaration at Rome (7 May 1938): "It is my irrevocable will and my legacy to the German people that the frontier of the Alps, which nature has erected between us, shall be regarded as forever unchangeable."[1]

Mussolini apparently believed Hitler's promises for in March 1940, while addressing a delegation from Bolzano, he assured the inhabitants of the Alto Adige who chose to remain in Italy that they would be protected. After stating that the Brenner was Italy's natural boundary, Mussolini added that: "The Alpine frontier ... should never again be a reason for a possible controversy."[2]

1. CID #46431, 7 October 1943.
2. New York Times, 22 March 1940.

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The counterpart of this German renunciation was a German-Italian agreement for the return of German-speaking Italian nationals to the Reich. An agreement signed at Rome on 21 October 1939 provided for a plebiscite to be held among persons of German origin and language in the provinces of Bolzano, Trento, Udine, and Belluno. Those who opted for Germany were to be "repatriated" to the Reich not later than 31 December 1942. Those who elected to remain in Italy were to renounce German citizenship.[1] The results, announced on 10 January 1940, showed that out of a total of 267,000 voters about 185,000 had opted for Germany and 82,000 for Italy. The province of Bolzano by itself accounted for 86 percent of all persons voting, and 90 percent of those opting for Germany.[2] The repatriation appears to have been commenced immediately,[3] but during 1941 it was apparently decided to postpone completing it until the end of the war.[4]

Despite these arrangements for a permanent solution of the German-Italian boundary issue, the Fascist government instituted a vigorous program of fortifications along the German frontier prior to Italy's entrance into the war. The work was halted for a time, apparently in response to

1. Istituto per gli studi di politica internazionale: Annuario di politica internazionale, 1939 (Milan, 1940), p. 289.
2. Appendix II.
3. CID #54058, 10 December 1942.
4. CID #16420, 7 October 1941.

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German pressure, but was resumed during 1941[1] and substantially completed, according to reports, by April 1943.[2] Defensive measures were adopted by the Italians at the time of Mussolini's overthrow at the end of July 1943,[3] but failed to prevent the disarmament of the Italian garrisons by the Germans as soon as the Italian surrender was announced.[4] Thereafter German military control was speedily established in all parts of northern Italy.

II. GERMAN DE FACTO ANNEXATION

The rapidity with which the Germans took over the civil administration of the northern Italian border provinces suggests that they were acting in accordance with plans laid long before the Italian surrender. Clear intimation that the Germans planned to profit by Italy's difficulties to incorporate Italian territory into the Reich was given by the National Fascist Government Radio, via Berlin, within a fortnight of the Italian surrender. A broadcast describing arrangements allegedly made by Hitler and Mussolini for the stabilization of Europe stated: "Venezia Giulia naturally will be incorporated into the Greater German Reich." The same broadcast declared that Mussolini's Italy would not be asked to return the Trentino, which had been "definitely" given to Mussolini by

1. CIO #16420, 7 October 1941.
2. CIB #33908, 20 April 1943.
3. Berne wire 5629, 10 September 1943.
4. Ibid; CID 47199, 27 October 1943.

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Hitler;[1] however, rumors that Germany had already annexed the provinces of Trento, Bolzano, and Belluno became current within a few days.[2]

A. Establishment of Operational Zones

A special administrative status, clearly pointing toward German annexation, was given to both the Venezia Giulia and province of Udine as well as the Venezia Tridentina and province of Belluno by the Germans during the early autumn of 1943. Unlike the rest of German-controlled Italy, which was nominally turned over to the administration of an Italian puppet government,[3] these regions were independently administered by German civilian officials who also held corresponding administrative posts inside the Greater Reich.

For purposes of this direct type of administration the Germans established two special administrative or "operational" zones -- the Alpenvorland or Cisalpine Territory and the Adriatisches Küstenland or Adriatic Littoral.[4] The Alpenvorland

1. FCC: Daily, 22 September 1943.
2. La Suisse, 10 October 1943 (News Digest #1263).
3. "German Administrative Control in Northern Italy," R & A No. 2161.
4. FCC: Daily, 27 October 1943, 2 November 1943; Innsbrucker Nachrichten, 17 November 1943 (News Digest #1301); Neues Wiener Tageblatt, 7 December 1943 (News Digest #1318); Donauzeitung, 30 March 1944 (News Digest #1421); Innsbrucker Nachrichten, 27 April 1944 (News Digest #1441); Libera Stampa, 9 May 1944 (News Digest #1445); Popolo, 7 June 1944 (News Digest #1486); CID #60629, 17 February 1944.

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embraces not only the historical provinces of Bolzano and Trento but also the province of Belluno, which has been Italian since 1866.[1] The Adriatisches Küstenland embraces not only the entire compartment of Venezia Giulia (provinces of Gorizia, Trieste, Pola(or Istria) and Fiume(or Carnaro or Quarnero), but also the province of Udine (Italian since 1866) as well as the Yugoslav territory of Ljubljana (Lubiana, annexed by Italy in 1941), the city of Sušak and surrounding territory, and the island of Krk (Veglia).[2]

The administration of each zone is headed by a High Commissioner, who is at the same time Gauleiter of the adjacent administrative division within the Greater German Reich. The High Commissioner of the Alpenvorland, who resides in Innsbruck[3] Franz Hofer, is also Gauleiter of the German Gau

1. Innsbrucker Nachrichten, 27 September 1943 (News Digest #1259); ibid., 17 November 1943 (News Digest #1301); Avanti! (Naples), 7 February 1944; Aftontidningen, 17 April 1944 (Press Intell Cable); Dagens Nyheter, 19 April 1944 (News Digest #1428); Libera Stampa, 9 May 1944 (News Digest #1445); Popolo, 7 June 1944 (News Digest #1485); New York Herald Tribune, 12 June 1944; CID #46431, 7 October 1943; CID #60629, 17 February 1944. The generic term Venezia Giulia (one of Italy's compartments) includes both the provinces of Bolzano and Trento. The Germans refer to the province of Bolzano as Süd Tirol, while the Italians use the name Alto Adige. The province of Trento is commonly referred to as Italian South Tyrol or Trentino.
2. Donauzeitung, 30 March 1944 (News Digest #1421); Libera Stampa, 9 May 1944 (News Digest #1445); Aftontidningen, 17 May 1944; Popolo, 7 June 1944 (News Digest #1485); New York Herald Tribune, 12 July 1944; CID #62179, 16 February 1944.
3. CID #46431, 7 October 1943.

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Tirol-Vorarlberg;[1] the High Commissioner of the Adriatisches Küstenland, Dr. Friedrich Rainer with headquarters in Trieste,[2] is also Gauleiter of the German Gau Kärnten.[3] These arrangements are similar to those which obtained in Alsace-Lorraine, Luxembourg, Lower Styria, and Upper Carniola, which were also regarded as slated for eventual incorporation into the Reich.

B. Frontier Regulations

Frontier regulations in force at the borders of Alpenvorland and Adriatisches Küstenland afford a further indication that these territories have in effect been annexed to Germany. They cannot be entered from Italy without a passport bearing a visa from the German Command in Italy.[4] Italy's frontiers are no longer at the Brenner and Fiume. The Nazi authorities have dismissed the Fascist customs officers and

1. Innsbrucker Nachrichten, 27 September 1943 (News Digest #1259); ibid., 27 October 1943 (News Digest #1284); Neues Wiener Tageblatt, 7 December 1943 (News Digest #1318); Dagens Nyheter, 19 April 1944 (News Digest #1428); Arbetaren, 25 May 1944 (Press Intell Cable); New York Herald Tribune, 12 July 1944; CID #46431, 7 October 1943; CID #60629, 17 February 1944; CID #73903, 30 May 1944.
2. CID #62179, 16 February 1944; CID #80333, 29 June 1944.
3. Donauzeitung, 30 March 1944 (News Digest #1421); La Suisse, 12 May 1944 (News Digest #1449); Aftontidningen, 17 May 1944 (Press Intell Cable); New York Herald Tribune, 12 July 1944; CID #62179, 16 February 1944; CID #79596, 12 June 1944; CID #80333, 29 June 1944.
4. London radio, 5 May 1944 (FCC: Ticker); Agence Télégraphique Suisse, 9 May 1944 (News Digest #1446); Gazette de Lausanne, 26 May 1944 (Press Intell Cable); Deutsche Adriazeitung, 4 June 1944 (News Digest #1474); ibid., 9 June 1944 (News Digest #1485); Popolo, 7 June 1944 (News Digest #1485); Deutsche Adriazeitung, 8 July 1944 (News Digest #1503); New York Herald Tribune, 12 July 1944.

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replaced them by Germans.[1] In the Alpenvorland customs offices have been established at Borghetto (near Ala, on the 1914 Austro-Italian frontier), at Primolano, and at Alano-Fener; travelers are stopped at these points and permitted to pass only if they can produce proper credentials.[2] A similar situation exists in the Adriatisches Küstenland, where all entry or exit has been prohibited (effective 10 June 1944) except for persons bearing a military pass.[3]

C. Military Conscription

The Nazis appear to regard the inhabitants of the annexed provinces as German and not Italian nationals. A communiqué issued after a meeting of the prefects of the Alpenvorland, called by Gauleiter Dr. Hofer (1 April 1944), stated that the Gauleiter appreciated the ready cooperation of the people, and that, as they had the same obligations, they had also the same rights as other inhabitants of the

1. London radio, 5 May 1944 (FCC: Ticker); Agence Télégraphique Suisse, 9 May 1944 (News Digest #1446); New York Herald Tribune, 12 July 1944.
2. Agence Télégraphique Suisse, 9 May 1944 (News Digest #1446); Deutsche Adriazeitung, 8 July 1944 (News Digest #1503); Popolo, 7 June 1944 (News Digest #1485).
3. Deutsche Adriazeitung, 4 June 1944 (News Digest #1474); ibid., 9 June 1944 (News Digest #1480).

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Reich.[1] The Germans have been recruiting troops in the Alpenvorland since April 1944, with the object of forming a separate Trentino Corps as part of the German Army.[2] In the Adriatisches Küstenland, mobilization for war service was ordered in July 1944 on the basis of a decree issued by Gauleiter Rainer on 29 November 1943.[3] It was announced that the conscripts would receive the pay and enjoy all of the privileges of German members of the Wehrmacht.[4] Drafted troops are liable to serve wherever German authorities deem most opportune. On the other hand, German authorities have forbidden the Mussolini government to recruit troops in either the Alpenvorland or the Adriatisches Küstenland.[5] German efforts to enforce universal conscription in the annexed territories, however, met with decided popular opposition in both the Alpenvorland and Adriatisches Küstenland, where the great majority of the conscripts did not answer the call preferring to join the patriots.[6]

1. Popolo, 7 June 1944 (News Digest #1485).
2. CID #73903, 30 May 1944; Popolo, 7 June 1944 (News Digest #1485).
3. Deutsche Adriazeitung, 30 July 1944 (News Digest #1522).
4. Bern wire #5383, 18 August 1944.
5. Popolo, 7 June 1944 (News Digest #1485); New York Herald Tribune, 12 July 1944.
6. CID #73903, 30 May 1944; Situation Report: ITALY, 26 August 1944.

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D. German Statements on Annexation

Hitherto German official spokesmen have refrained from declaring the Alpenvorland and Adriatisches Küstenland annexed to Germany. A high Berlin official in October 1943 actually denied a Reuters report of the annexation of Bolzano, Trento, and Belluno.[1] Unofficial German statements, however, make it clear that the Nazis look upon the Alpenvorland, at any rate, as forming to all intents and purposes an integral part of the Reich territory. A writer in the NSZ Westmark declared that "the Reich, since 1933, has systematically proceeded to reunite all Germans by abolishing frontiers. It began with the Saar, once cut off. There followed the Ostmark (i.e. Austria), the Sudetenland, the German provinces in the East, Alsace and Lorraine, and the South Tyrol (sic). Even the scattered German settlements in other countries (Volkstumexklaven) are today intimately linked with the Reich."[2] At an East Tyrolese shooting competition held on 3-4 June 1944, Gauleiter Hofer of the Alpenvorland thanked Gauleiter Rainer of the Adriatisches Küstenland for his support in bringing the North, South, and East Tyrol closer together.[3] Similarly, the leader of the German Ethnical Group in Slovakia, Karmasin, stressed the community of the German advance posts in the Carpathian Region and the South Tyrol.[4]

1. DNB, 9 October 1943 (News Digest #1261); CID #60629, 17 February 1944.
2. CID #60629, 17 February 1944.
3. Kärntner Zeitung, 5 June 1944 (News Digest #1473).
4. Slovak radio, 12 December 1943 (News Digest #1316).

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E. The Fascist Reaction

The neo-Fascist government has been powerless to resist these German encroachments. The Fascist press simply denied the reports of German annexation as long as it could do so with any measure of credibility.[1] More recently the futility of such denials appears to have been realized, although news of the real state of affairs is still carefully kept from the Italian public.[2] Mussolini, when requested to intercede with the Germans, is reported to have said that he could do nothing about the annexation of the northeastern Italian provinces adding cynically: "I am sorry about Udine."[3]

III. THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE ANNEXED REGIONS

A. The Supreme Commissioners

The Supreme Commissioners enjoy absolute civilian powers: all authorities, including especially the judicial, are under them.[4] They issue decrees and legislative decisions, appoint prefects for the various provinces and German Advisers to the prefects, have the prerogative of granting pardons and can annul every civil and criminal sentence.[5]

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1. La Suisse, 10 October 1943 (News Digest #1263); CID #60629, 17 February 1944; Libera Stampa, 26 January 1944 (News Digest #1356).
2. Popolo, 7 June 1944 (News Digest #1485).
3. Libera Stampa, 9 May 1944 (News Digest #1445).
4. CID #62179, 16 February 1944; Aftontidningen, 17 May 1944 (Press Intell Cable); Il Popolo, 7 June 1944 (News Digest #1485).
5. Libera Stampa, 9 May 1944 (News Digest #1445).

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B. The Executive Power

As already pointed out, ultimate executive power rests with the Supreme Commissioners of the Alpenvorland and Adriatisches Küstenland, who are also Gauleiters of Tirol-Vorarlberg and Kärnten respectively.[1]

1. Provincial Administration.

Within the two territories the Italian system of provincial and local government has been retained, with modifications which ensure German control. It appears to be a consistent policy of the German press to refer to the Italian provinces by the German term "Kreise."[2]

The prefects have been replaced to make way for new appointees more reliable from the German point of view. Appointive practices seem to differ somewhat in detail in the two zones. In the predominantly German-speaking province of Bolzano (Alpenvorland) a German prefect, Peter Hofer, was appointed.[3] (Hofer was also the Volksgruppenleiter, or leader of the German Ethnical Group, for the province.[4] He is reported to have been killed in an Allied air raid and replaced by another German, Dr. Karl Tinzl.)[5] In the Adriatisches Küstenland, on the other hand, the High Commissioner has not

1. Above, sec. II, A.
2. Innsbrucker Nachrichten, 17 November 1943 (News Digest #1301); Deutsche Adriazeitung, 2 June 1944 (News Digest #1473).
3. Innsbrucker Nachrichten, 27 September 1943 (News Digest #1259); Arbetaren, 25 May 1944 (Press Intell Cable); CID #46431, 7 October 1943. A list of prefects and mayors appointed by the German Gauleiters appears in Appendix I.
4. Slovak radio, 12 December 1943 (News Digest #1316).
5. Neues Wiener Tageblatt, 7 December 1943 (News Digest #1318); Slovak radio, 12 December 1943 (News Digest #1316).

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named German prefects, but has appointed Slovene and Croat vice-prefects to serve under the Italian prefects -- allegedly with the object of relieving the strained national relations prevailing in the area.[1] In the Italian-annexed areas of Ljubljana and Sušak-Krk,[2] and possibly in the province of Pola (Istria),[3] the prefects themselves are believed to be either Slovene or Croat.

More important than these changes of prefectural personnel has been the appointment of German Advisers whose duty is to act as representatives of the High Commissioners in the individual provinces. All administrative actions of the provincial prefects must receive the advance approval of the German Advisers.[4] Mayors of individual communes are appointed by the High Commissioners, acting through the German Advisers.[5] In effect, the German Advisers are the real administrative heads of the provinces, and the prefects merely act as figureheads.[6] So far as is known, no German Adviser has been appointed for the Province of Bolzano, where the Prefect is himself a German.

1. FCC: Daily, 8 December 1943 (Bari radio); Donauzeitung, 30 March 1944 (News Digest #1421).
2. CID #80333, 29 June 1944.
3. CID #79596, 12 June 1944; cf. also FCC: Daily, 8 December 1943 (Bari radio).
4. CID #62179, 16 February 1944; CID #80333, 29 June 1944.
5. Deutsche Adriazeitung, 27 May 1944 (News Digest #1470).
6. Deutsche Adriazeitung, 27 May 1944, 2 June 1944, 21 June 1944 (News Digest #1470, 1473, 1490); CID #80333, 29 June 1944.

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Attempts by the neo-Fascist authorities to install their own prefects in the northeastern provinces were quickly frustrated by the Nazis. In one case a certain Dr. Salerno, was requested by German authorities to leave within twenty-four hours or risk internment. He left.[1] Indicative of the low esteem in which the Mussolini government is held in this area is the fact that the Germans choose prefects or mayors who are not even members of the Fascist Party.[2]

2. The Police.

Information as to the present organization or nationality of the state (rural) police is not obtainable. (Under the Fascist regime the maintenance of order in the provinces was entrusted to agents of the questura (under the prefect) and to the carabinieri.) It is considered very likely that the administration of the state police is now carried out by German SS agents.[3]

The Italian city police has been retained by the Nazis, at least in the Adriatisches Küstenland, but even the local police is subject to the control of German police

1. Libera Stampa, 9 May 1944 (News Digest #1445); Aftontidningen, 17 May 1944 (Press Intell Cable).
2. Libera Stampa, 9 May 1944 (News Digest #1445); CID #62179, 16 February 1944.
3. Trieste radio, 8 March 1944 (News Digest #1391); CID #80333, 29 June 1944.

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commissioners.[1] In Trieste, policemen wear yellow armbands bearing the German word "Polizei."[2] In Fiume, the present Nazi police commissioner was already in the city before the Italian surrender, posing as manager of a garage.[3]

C. Legislation

The German administration in the Alpenvorland and Adriatisches Küstenland has effected far-reaching changes in the existing legal system. In the Alpenvorland German law has replaced Italian law in certain instances, while in others, as in the case of the Adriatisches Küstenland, Italian law is valid only when it does not conflict with subsequent orders issued by the Germans.

1. The Alpenvorland.

In November 1943 the High Commissioner established at Bolzano a special court for the "district" (Kreis) of Bolzano, Trento, and Belluno, with jurisdiction over all cases involving German citizens or interests. It was expressly provided that the special court would apply the German law of the Alpen and Donau Gaue.[4] In effect

1. La Suisse, 12 May 1944 (News Digest #1449); CID #62179, 16 February 1944; cf. also New York Herald Tribune, 12 July 1944.
2. La Suisse, 12 May 1941 (News Digest #1449).
3. CID #62179, 16 February 1944.
4. Innsbrucker Nachrichten, 17 November 1943 (News Digest #1301); CID #60629, 17 February 1944.

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this provision uprooted the Italian legal system which had been in force in Belluno since 1866 and in Bolzano and Trento since 1919.

New legislation has been issued by the German authorities in the form of "wartime and economic laws" and regulations ostensibly designed to "ensure the supply of the front and homeland with all vital goods and those essential for the conduct of war."[1] On the other hand, laws passed by the neo-Fascist regime are invalid.[2]

2. The Adriatisches Küstenland.

A decree issued by the High Commissioner of the Adriatisches Küstenland in September 1943 preserved the validity of Italian law then in force, provided it did not conflict with subsequent orders issued by the Germans.[3] Fascist legislation in force up to that time is believed to be still valid.[4] The Fascist Official Gazette, in which all laws and decrees are published, is not circulated, and the local press does not carry notice of neo-Fascist decrees.[5]

1. Innsbrucker Nachrichten, 27 April 1944 (News Digest 1441).
2. Il Popolo, 7 June 1944 (News Digest #1485).
3. Radio Littorale Adriatico, 17 March 1944 (News Digest #1400).
4. Libera Stampa, 9 May 1944 (News Digest #1445).
5. Ibid.; Aftontidningen, 17 May 1944 (Press Intell Cable).

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New decrees issued by the German authorities are reported to be published only in the German and Croatian languages.[1]

D. The Judiciary

Measures have been taken to make the courts of the Alpenvorland and the Adriatisches Küstenland independent from the Italian judicial system.

1. The Alpenvorland.

In addition to instituting the special court at Bolzano with jurisdiction over all controversies involving German citizens or interests -- the decisions of which cannot be appealed[2] -- the Germans have divorced the existing courts from the Italian judicial system. A decree of November 1943 established the Trento Court of Appeal as an "independent" court of appeal under the German name Appelationsgericht. Trient. It has jurisdiction over the "administration of civilian justice" for persons of Italian origin in the "districts" of Bolzano, Trento, Belluno, and Rovereto (in the province of Trento).[3]

2. The Adriatisches Küstenland.

An order of the High Commissioner of the Adriatisches Küstenland prohibits judicial petitions to courts outside the zone.[4] The effect of this decree is to accentuate

1. FCC: Daily, 8 December 1943 (Bari radio).
2. Innsbrucker Nachrichten, 17 November 1943 (News Digest #1301); cf. sec. B, 2, above.
3. Innsbrucker Nachrichten, 17 November 1943 (News Digest #1301); CID #60629, 17 February 1944.
4. Libera Stampa, 9 May 1944 (News Digest #1445).

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the separation from Italy, as it abolishes the right to have recourse to the Italian supreme court (Corte di Cassazione) and the special Court of Accounts (Corte dei Conti). It appears, therefore, that the judgments of the local courts of first instance and the Trieste Court of Appeals are final, unless vacated or modified by orders of the High Commissioner. No judgment apparently becomes final until it has the High Commissioner's approval.[1]

E. Economic Control

Information on German economic control is available only for the Adriatisches Küstenland, where stringent measures have been applied, particularly in the agricultural field. Although Italians have been installed in a number of economic offices, they are subordinate to higher German officials.[2]

The German Provincial Peasant Leader (Landesbauernführer) of the Gau Kärnten, Reinhold Huber,[3] holds a key position in the "occupied" territory as Leader of the Agricultural and Forestry Section of the High Commissioner's headquarters in Trieste.[4] Huber appoints the provincial agricultural leaders; those of Udine (Baron Pyrrhus Locatelli Hagelauer) and Gorizia (Alberto Köchler) appear to be Germans.[5]

1. Libera Stampa, 9 May 1944 (News Digest #1445); Avanti! (Naples), 7 February 1944.
2. Deutsche Adriazeitung, 19 May 1944, 25 May 1944, 27 May 1944 (News Digest #1463, 1469, 1472).
3. Kärntner Zeitung, 21 February 1944 (News Digest #1384).
4. Deutsche Adriazeitung, 19 May 1944 (News Digest #1463).
5. Deutsche Adriazeitung, 25 May 1944, 27 May 1944 (News Digest #1469, 1472).

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The economic police and the suppression of the black market are directly subordinate to the German SS. SS Sturmbannführer Wölbing has been commissioned to deal with the black market.[1] The Supreme Commander of the SS (who is subordinate to the Gauleiter-High Commissioner) heads a newly organized Economic Police Force, with headquarters in Trieste. The functions of the Economic Police, which is recruited locally, are: (a) control of the State Pool and of the processing and distribution of foodstuffs, and measures against extortion; (b) prevention of unauthorized removal of goods from the zone; (c) control and enforcement of prices fixed by the competent authorities.[2]

The president of the Council of Corporative Economy for the province of Fiume, a post held under the Fascist regime by the prefect, is now a German. Before Italy's capitulation he was in Fiume disguised as a waiter in a local restaurant.[3]

F. Fascism

The influence of neo-Fascists in the annexed territories is merely nominal, where it exists at all. The Mussolini regime no longer exercises the power of appointment, and Fascist officials receive no support or consideration from the Germans.

1. Deutsche Adriazeitung, 7 June 1944 (News Digest #1478).
2. Trieste radio, 8 March 1944 (News Digest #1391).
3. CID #62179, 16 February 1944.

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Espionage and denunciation are said to be the only activities in which the Fascists are still permitted to engage.[1]

In the Alpenvorland the Fascist Party actually appears to have been liquidated. As early as last winter it was reported that the Fascist badge was seldom seen.[2] The remaining Fascist officials are forbidden to wear their uniforms.[3] The Nazi banner flies over the "Casa Littoria" at Trento, and the word "Platzkommandatur" appears in huge letters across the facade.[4] According to press reports of June 1944 and later, the Fascist Party is strictly forbidden in the Alpenvorland,[5] and all Fascist organizations in that area have been dissolved.[6] In the Adriatisches Küstenland, on the other hand, a new Fascist Party weekly, Italia Repubblicana, was inaugurated by the Party's federal commissioner as recently as May 1944.[7]

IV. THE SUPPRESSION OF ITALIAN RIGHTS

Shortly after Italy's capitulation the Nazi authorities began systematically to de-Italianize the annexed territories and to suppress every vestige of Italian culture. These anti-Italian measures affected all fields of activity, ranging from the curtailment of the Italian press and motion pictures to the outright suppression of Italian schools and discrimination against Italians in public and even private concerns. In the

1. Libera Stampa, 9 May 1944 (News Digest #1445).
2. CID #62179, 16 February 1944.
3. New York Herald Tribune, 12 July 1944.
4. Il Popolo, 7 June 1944 (News Digest #1485).
5. Ibid.
6. Agence Télégraphique Suisse, 11 August 1944 (News Digest #1529).
7. Deutsche Adriazeitung, 21 May 1944 (Press Intell Cable).

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Alpenvorland Italian culture and rights have been replaced by German; in the Adriatisches Küstenland, where there is no significant German settlement, Slavic interests have been promoted at the expense of the local Italian population. The mayor (podestà) in Fiume is a Croat appointed by the Germans, who in general are following a pro-Croatian policy.[1] Dr. Rainer, High Commissioner of the Adriatisches Küstenland, stated that German policy was directed toward aiding the people, particularly farmers and workers, without regard for nationality or religion provided only that the recipients of help were "decent and willing to collaborate."[2] In a similar vein Regierungspraesident Wolsegger, Dr. Rainer's first assistant, stated that until the end of the war administration must be markedly tolerant and every extreme avoided.[3]

This campaign was undertaken without reference to the real ethnic situation in the annexed territories. In the total population of the Alpenvorland Germans constitute only a small minority. Out of a total resident population of 885,000 (1936), only 261,000 (29.5 percent) were qualified as Germans to vote in the plebiscite of 1939, and only 180,000 (20.3 percent) opted for Germany. The great majority of the voters (87.9 percent, or 229,500 persons) came from the province of Bolzano alone, where Germans apparently still constitute a majority of the

1. CID #62179, 16 February 1944.
2. Donauzeitung, 30 March 1944 (News Digest #1421).
3. Deutsche Zeitung in Kroatien, 9 May 1944 (News Digest #1453).

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population.[1] In the other two provinces of the Alpenvorland, however, German settlement is too slight to justify any Nazi claims to these territories based on ethnic grounds.[2]

Similarly in the Adriatisches Küstenland, the Nazi pro-German and pro-Slavic policy overlooks the fact that this area is largely Italian in ethnic composition and culture. Valid statistics concerning the ethnic situation in this area are not available; however, it is clear that among the 1,700,000 resident population of the Adriatisches Küstenland (1936) minus Ljubljana, Sušak, and Krk, there are at least 1,050,000 Italians.[3]

A. The Press

In the Alpenvorland Italian newspapers have in many instances been suppressed and replaced by German-language dailies. In Bolzano the Italian paper Provincia di Bolzano has ceased publication. Simultaneously there reappeared a strongly nationalist German daily, the Bozener Tageblatt, which had been discontinued under the Italian regime.[4] At present no Italian dailies are published in Bolzano, and for a long time the sale of all Fascist papers has been forbidden. News about Italy is published in a special column of the German-language press.[5]

1. See Appendix II.
2. In the 1939 plebiscite only 2 percent of the total population voted for Germany in the provinces of Trento and Belluno.
3. The figure of 650,000 Yugoslavs in Venezia Giulia given by Gaetano Salvemini (What to do with Italy, New York, 1943, p. 207) is accepted by the Yugoslav Partisan Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, Josep Smodlaka, in the Partisan magazine Nova Jugoslavija for June-July 1944.
4. Transocean, 1 October 1943 (News Digest #1255); Svenska Dagbladet, 7 October 1943 (News Digest #1260); Morgontidningen, 13 February 1944 (News Digest #1370); Arbetaren, 25 May 1944 (Press Intell Cable); CID #60629, 17 February 1944.
5. Il Popolo, 7 June 1944 (News Digest #1488).

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A substantially similar situation exists in the Adriatisches Küstenland. With a few exceptions, only Slovene and German-language newspapers are allowed to appear. Official bulletins are printed exclusively in German.[1] In Trieste, Il Piccolo is still published in Italian, but its editor is appointed by the Germans and it features the reports of German news agencies; those of the Italian Stefani agency are relegated to the category of news of foreign origin.[2] Meanwhile Il Piccolo is overshadowed by a new German daily, the Deutsche Adriazeitung, also published at Trieste.

German propagandists and the German-controlled press have attempted to portray the Germans as impartial arbiters among the various local ethnic groups. A German controlled Yugoslav paper announced that the weekly Adria Illustrierte, published by the Adria Verlag, had issued its first number in German, Slovene, Croat, and Italian.[3]

B. Italian Language and Education

The Italian provinces annexed to the Reich appear to be rapidly losing their Italian appearance. In the province of Bolzano the Italian language is said to be prohibited, with German the only authorized language. In Bolzano, however, bilingual ration cards are reportedly being used.[4] Italian is

1. Avanti! (Naples), 7 February 1944.
2. Libera Stampa, 9 May 1944 (News Digest #1445); Aftontidningen, 17 May 1944 (Press Intell Cable).
3. Hrvatski Narod, 23 April 1944 (News Digest #1440).
4. Il Popolo, 7 June 1944 (News Digest #1485).

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no longer taught in the schools. The only vestiges of Italian rule appear to be a few street signs and a few small advertisements in shop windows.[1]

In the Adriatisches Küstenland all Italian schools have been closed except in Trieste. Everywhere else the schools are either German or Slovene. Over 200 Italian kindergartens are said to have been suppressed, and 300 teachers dismissed. Furthermore, public advertisements in Italian are said to be forbidden.[2]

C. Motion Pictures and Radio

German news films are shown to the exclusion of films made by the Italian LUCE agency (L'Unione Cinematografica Educativa), and German feature pictures with badly translated subtitles are frequently presented in the theaters.[3] In the Alpenvorland, the Italian state-operated broadcasting monopoly, EIAR (Ente Italiano Audizioni Radiofoniche), appears to be no longer under Italian control. Its Italian employees are reported to have been refused access to the stations.[4]

D. Deportation and Persecution

German anti-Italian measures are directed not only against Italian culture but also against the Italian population

1. Avanti! (Naples), 7 February 1944; Morgontidningen, 13 February 1944 (News Digest #1370), Dagens Nyheter, 19 April 1944 (News Digest #1428).
2. Avanti! (Naples), 7 February 1944; Libera Stampa, 28 February 1944 (News Digest #1384).
3. Libera Stampa, 9 May 1944 (News Digest #1445).
4. Avanti! (Naples), 7 February 1944.

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itself. An obvious effort is being made to force Italians to leave the annexed regions and to prevent further Italian immigration from other provinces.[1] The methods used are alleged to range from various forms of discrimination against Italians to outright deportation of sections of the population.

German technicians placed in key positions in industrial and mining concerns hamper the freedom of action of Italian management to such an extent that the authority of Italians has become merely nominal. Public utilities are controlled by the Nazi authorities, who employ exclusively German personnel. An outright anti-Italian terrorism, ostensibly designed to protect the interests of the non-Italian local population against the Italians, is said to reign in the rural districts and smaller communities of the Adriatisches Küstenland. In the Alpenvorland, persons who opted for Italy in the 1939 plebiscite are said to be the victims of particular discrimination.[2]

In February 1944 the Swiss newspaper Libera Stampa reported that the Nazi authorities were laying plans for mass expulsions of Italians, or for their deportation to work in Germany. The same paper stated that Italians were being dismissed from their posts and heavily taxed, thus forcing them to emigrate by economic pressure.[3] In Fiume all non-resident

1. Transocean, 20 March 1944 (News Digest #1400).
2. Avanti! (Naples), 7 February 1944; Agence Telegraphique Suisse, 9 May 1944 (News Digest #1446).
3. Libera Stampa, 28 February 1944 (News Digest #1384).

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Italians have been reported forced to leave, while preparations to deport Italian nationals from Trieste and Bolzano have also been reported.[1] In August 1944 the Swiss press reported that Italians who had settled in the Alpenvorland since the fall of Mussolini were being deported to Germany.[2] It has also been reported that persons of German origin who left the Alpenvorland after the 1939 plebiscite are being returned to their former homes.[3]

1. Avanti! (Naples), 7 February 1944; CID #62179, 16 February 1944; OSS source S, 16 June 1944.
2. Agence Télégraphique Suisse, 11 August 1944 (News Digest #1524).
3. Avanti! (Naples), 7 February 1944.

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Appendix I: ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL OF THE ANNEXED PROVINCES

ALPENVORLAND

High Commissioner: Franz Hofer (Gauleiter of Tirol-Vorarlberg)

Prefects:[1]

(a) Bolzano: Dr. Karl Tinzl (replacing Peter Hofer)

(b) Trento: Franz Bertolini

(c) Belluno: Italo Foschi

1. Innsbrucker Nachrichten, 27 September 1943 (News Digest #1259); Neues Wiener Tageblatt, 7 December 1943 (News Digest #1318); Slovak radio, 12 December 1943 (News Digest #1316); Arbetaren, 25 May 1944 (Press Intell Cable); CID #46431, 7 October 1943.

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ADRIATISCHES KUESTENLAND

High Commissioner: Dr. Friedrich Rainer (Gauleiter of Kärnten)

Prefects:

(a) Trieste: Dr. Bruno Coceani (or Fociani?)[1]

(b) Gorizia: Count Marino Pace[2]

(c) Fiume (Carnaro): Dr. Alessandro Spalatin (or Spalatini)[3]

(d) Udine (Friuli):

(e) Pola (Istria): Dr. Oskar Turina[4]

(f) Ljubljana: Rupnik[5]

(g) Sušak and Krk: (Dr. Oskar Turina[6]
(Kolacio (?)[7]

German Advisers

(a) Trieste: Landrat Hinteregger[8]

(b) Ljubljana: Dr. Dovjak[9]

1. FCC: Daily, 27 October 1943, 12 June 1944.
2. FCC: Daily, 2 November 1943.
3. FCC: Daily, 2 November 1943; CID #62179, 16 February 1944.
4. CID #79596, 12 June 1944.
5. CID #80333, 29 June 1944.
6. Hrvatski Narod, 1 August 1944 (News Digest #1524).
7. Hrvatski Narod, 20 April 1944 (Balkan Press Review).
8. Deutsche Adriazeitung, 27 May 1944 (News Digest #1472); CID #80333, 29 June 1944.
9. CID #80333, 29 June 1944.

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Mayors (Podestà):

(a) Trieste: Dr. Cesare Pallini[1]

(b) Gorizia: Count Alessandro Coronini[2]

(c) Sušak and Krk: Kolacio (?)[3]

Fascist Commissioners:

(a) Trieste: Luigi Ruzzier[4]

(b) Fiume (Carnaro): Dr. Stemmer[5]

(c) Ljubljana: Luigi Angelo Pizzani[6]

1. FCC: Daily, 27 October 1943.
2. Deutsche Adriazeitung, 27 May 1944 (News Digest #1470).
3. Hrvatski Narod, 20 April 1944 (Balkan Press Review).
4. Deutsche Adriazeitung, 21 May 1944 (Press Intell Cable).
5. FCC: Daily, 27 October 1943.
6. Italian Home Service radio, 28 June 1944 (News Digest #1487).

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Appendix II: THE POPULATION OF THE ALPENVORLAND AND THE PLEBISCITE OF 1939[a]

	Alpenvorland					Total (Four Provinces)
	Bolzano	Trento	Belluno	Total	Udine	
Italian Census 1921						
Germans	190,889	4,761	?	?	?	?
Italians	30,952	377,433	?	?	?	?
Latins	11,694	6,559	? [b]	?	? [b]	?
Total	233,535	388,753	228,714	851,002	721,804	1,572,806
Italian Census 1936						
Resident	303,306	384,610	205,297	893,213	713,203	1,606,416
Present	277,720	391,309	216,333	885,362	721,670	1,607,032
Plebiscite 1939						
For Germany	166,488	13,015	1,006	180,509	4,576	185,085
For Italy	63,012	11,438	6,423	80,873	1,027	81,900
Total	229,500	24,453	7,429	261,382	5,603	266,985

a. Annuario Statistico Italiano, 1921; Nuovo Dizionario dei Comuni... del Regno d'Italia, 1938; New York Times, 4 and 7 January 1940; CID #54085, 10 December 1942.

b. "Present" population.

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